

## **Participating in a SCC Mass with Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist in Nairobi, Kenya**

### **SEE**

I visited St. Ann's Small Christian Community (SCC) in St. Catherine of Alexandria's Parish South C (Nairobi West Estate Settlement), Nairobi Archdiocese, Nairobi, Kenya on 5 November 2013. The participants totaled 19 (15 women and 4 men) who gathered in the home of Ann Waithira who was to receive the sacraments of Christian Initiation that is, Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion. According to the chairperson, Leah Kihara, this arrangement was made to support their SCC sister Ann who had completed all the steps of the RCIA (adult catechumenate) only to be left out on the actual day following an automobile accident. The mass was from 6.00 to 7.45 p.m. to make it convenient for members who were workers to attend.

The readings of the mass were those of the day. The parish priest, Fr. Boguslaw preached for 10 minutes dwelling largely on the importance of the sacrament for the individual as well as the community that celebrates it. Seven spontaneous prayers were said during the prayer of the faithful. Ann was baptized, confirmed and given her first Holy Communion.

After mass, short speeches were made: one from the chairperson; another from a catechism mate of Ann; from Fr. Boguslaw; and then Ann who expressed her joy on receiving Christ and for the community's support. The chairperson presented Ann with a gift, an icon of St. Ann. Then a cake was brought out and Ann was asked to cut it to mark her new birth in Christ. We all then celebrated with Ann participating in the cake and soft drinks. We sang hymns of praise and thanksgiving to God for the wonderful celebration and for the group.

### **JUDGE**

Conventional practice is that in mass the priest preaches or give the homily as the Father did. However, since it was in the context of a Small Christian Community, I would have preferred that Father give time to the participants to share their personal experiences with the sacraments of Christian Initiation and why they think it is important for them individually and communally. The place was also inconvenient as there was not much room for us since that we squeezed into a small estate room. The table that served as the altar was so low that Father Boguslaw virtually had to kneel for the consecration. Nevertheless the fellowship feeling that we felt in that small room as we sang our hearts out was awe inspiring.

### **ACT**

Even though the group felt that it was a happy fault that the number was no more than what was there, everyone still felt the need to have more men take up membership in the *jumuiya*

as pointed out above with four men to 15 women. It certainly goes without saying that the men need to do better than that. So it was agreed that the women continue to encourage their husbands to attend the *jumuiya* and the men, their fellow men.

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